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## A WINTER UNDERGROUND.

THE short but glorious summer of Lapland was drawing to a close, and I remembered with regret that the hour of my departure from Kublitz was at hand. Still I lingered, for I had spent several of the happiest weeks of my life in that fairy spot of earth, so far remote from the track of the bustling British tourist. I had grown attached to my simple-hearted hosts; and their constant kindness, their gay good-humour, and the freshness and novelty of the holiday-life, had indescribable charms for me. Kublitz is a place little known. It lies in Swedish Lapland, about a hundred and fifty miles beyond the extreme limits of Norway; and its silvery river and emerald pastures are surrounded by the far-stretching moorlands, of which by far the greater part of the country consists. Far away to the south might be seen, on a clear day, rising dimly above the vast purple moors, a line of blue peaks that faintly dotted the distant horizon. These are the Kohl Mountains, the mighty Scandinavian Alps which divide Norway from Sweden, and whose northernmost summits have often seemed to me, as I thus gazed on them from the Lapland wastes, the very outposts of European civilisation. To the north, a line of low hills broke the distant sky-line—the *last* range, I was told, between fair Kublitz and the grim icy bergs of the lonely Arctic Sea. There, among those hills, the northern bear roamed unmolested in his shaggy strength, the unhunted wolf howled along the deep ravines, the marten clung to the pine-branch, and the elk ranged the brakes, free from any fear of intrusive man. Nothing would have tempted my kindly Lapland hosts to explore that mountain-range, guarded by a thousand superstitious legends, and named, in their figurative tongue, the Witches' Hills. But let me try to describe Kublitz itself, as I saw it first, basking in the short-lived smile of the arctic summer, when nature seems to compensate by a wondrous lavishness of love and care for the ephemeral character of the enjoyment.

All that rocky glen where the village nestled, all those verdant prairies that encircled it, those shrubby woods that belted the meadows, and were bounded in their turn by the trackless moors, had blossomed like a garden in Fairyland. Fruit and flowers! everywhere fruit and flowers! The gray rocks that rose above the houses blushed literally crimson with the wild strawberries—those wondrous strawberries that spring up everywhere in Lapland, whose profusion is such that they stain the hoofs of the reindeer and the sledge of the traveller, yet are so delicate and matchless in flavour, that the Czar

himself sends for them, by *estafettes*, all the long, long way to his summer palace of Tsarskoy-Chèlè. But strawberries are not the only gifts that bounteous summer flings with full hands upon Lapland. The crags, the meadows, the thickets, glow and blossom with a thousand many-hued flowers; the meres and pools are white with lilies; the woods are full of strange fruits, and joyous songs of birds; the grass springs up luxuriantly; the ferns, mosses, lichens, have all their varied tints of deeper or brighter green; the moors are carpeted with red and purple heaths; and even the dangerous quagmires are ruddy with the tempting fruit of the cranberry. One never knows what a summer really is, never knows with what exuberant mirth the world can rejoice at bursting from the chains of winter, until one has seen Lapland.

And the people? Well, all I can say is, I liked them, and they me. I never met a young face or an old one among these simple folks that had not a pleasant smile for the stranger; I never went into a Lapland hut without finding a kindly welcome, for my worthy little hosts would bustle to fill the biggest bowl with milk, and the largest basket with berries, and to produce great piles of 'smolke' and dried fish from the sea-coast, and, luxury unparalleled, perhaps even a great black loaf, brought all the way from Norway (for Lapland has no bread), to do honour to the foreign guest. How could I help growing fond of these queer, elfin-looking, soft-hearted people? I had heard ugly stories of them among the Swedes and Norwegians: they were called savages, idolaters, enchanters, even cannibals; but I can only say that they not only did not eat me, but even abstained from fleecing me, as nations much more polished and accomplished are in the habit of doing to wayfarers. The village of Kublitz was built of green boughs and wattles, the posts alone which supported each cottage being of pine-timber. In fact, the huts were not cottages—they were leafy booths such as the roving Tatar sometimes constructs; and these summer palaces of living verdure added to the holiday air of the place, and were suggestive of a perpetual picnic. But the true houses were under the earth, not above its surface. The green tents I have been describing were mere temporary pavilions; and beneath them, with only a low chimney, like a magnified mole-hill, peeping above ground, were the true homes of the Laplanders, the caverned storehouses for all their worldly wealth, and their own dwellings for more than nine months of the year. And now the time was coming when the green booths were to be deserted, and the sun to vanish, and the strange underground life, like a mole's, was to begin again for the long iron-bound arctic winter. Peter Wow, the chief man

of the village, in whose wigwam I dwelt, warned me that the daylight would speedily cease, and that he had better prepare the boat to convey me down the river southwards, so that I might reach Norway 'before it got dark.' A strange idea seized me—what if I were to stop behind! I have been here through the daylight, the long three-months' day, that puzzled me so terribly at first, and robbed me of my sleep, and made me blink like an owl at the unwearied sun that *would* shine at midnight, and which upset all the habits of my previous life. I recollected what a strange sensation that had been, how new, fresh, and piquant; and it is not often, let me tell you, that a somewhat world-worn and world-weary man, who has passed his grand climacteric, can discover a sensation that shall be at once new, fresh, and piquant. I had promised to spend Christmas with my sister, in Gloucestershire, to be sure; but, 'Pahaw!' thought I, 'I can go next summer. Maria Jane hasn't seen me these eighteen years and more, so she can probably wait till Easter; and my nephews and nieces won't fret too much, I daresay, about the non-appearance of an uncle they never set their juvenile eyes upon. My mind is made up. I'll stay all night.'

A pretty long night, too, reader—a night that begins in early October, and ends in June. Having tried perpetual daylight, I was going to essay how I liked its antipodes. Peter Wow tried to dissuade me—I did not know what it was like, he said; but I told him that was my exact reason for going through the experience. Peter shrugged his shoulders; Madame Wow, or, more correctly speaking, Huswife Wow (for Lapland is not a land of titles, and there is but one class, that of the yeomanry, with their dependants and servants), lifted up her astonished eyes and hands; all the daughters tittered, and all the sons stared, at this remarkable decision on my part. But, as I not only paid Peter for my board and lodging at the unprecedentedly liberal rate of four silver rix-dollars a week, but could speak, and sing on occasion, in Swedish and Norse, knew a little of the Lapponic tongue, and played the fiddle and flute, besides being the owner of a musical-box, I was quite a popular character among my worthy entertainers, and my determination to rough it out through the long winter with them was taken as a compliment by the entire community. Accordingly, we moved into our winter-quarters.

A Lapland winter hut has generally two drawbacks, of a nature almost unbearable to Europeans—it is too crowded, and it is shockingly smoky. But Peter Wow, chief of the village, was a rich man in his way, and had a roomy and commodious set of caverns for his dwelling, with furs and eider-down quilts in plenty, as became the owner of five hundred reindeer. The family slept in a quaint tier of little box-beds, about the usual length of mignonette troughs, which were sunk into the clay-walls like a row of sleeping-berths on board a packet-ship. But I, as a distinguished foreigner, had a den to myself, such as a hermit of especially austere and self-mortifying tendencies might have constructed, for it was without a window of any kind, and air was admitted by means of the hollow trunk of an alder-tree, which had been thrust through the roof of the cave, and made a sort of wooden shaft overhead. The floor was carpeted, however, with soft dried moss, softer and more luxurious than the most costly three-piled velvet that ever loom wove; the bed was a pile of dressed deer-skins, as supple and pliant as silk; a copper lamp hung by a chain from the roof; I had pillows and bolsters stuffed with the plumage of the eider-duck and the wild swan, two bear-skin coverlets, and at least a dozen quilts of yielding eider-down; and, crowning magnificence! there was an old-fashioned chest of oaken drawers, with brass handles and key-plates, to which Peter Wow pointed proudly, as to a proof

of intercourse with the civilised world of modern Europe. It was evidently some relic of a wreck off the North Cape, and had been dragged many a weary mile by the patient deer that drew the sledges. I fancied the scent of the sea hung about it still.

Scarcely were we snugly established in our underground quarters, when, one fine evening, I was summoned to join a solemn procession which annually, according to immemorial custom, ascended a neighbouring hill to see the last of the sun for that year, and bid the orb of day 'good-bye!' It was a strangely picturesque sight, and not without its touching pathos, that assemblage of villagers, of every age, from the wrinkled grandaunt who tottered on his staff, and with a palsy-shaken hand shaded his aged eyes as he watched that fast-declining sun which was setting, not for a night, but for a drear winter, and which he might scarcely hope to mark again, down to the child whose wondering eyes noted the scene for the first time since its reason began to dawn. All were there—the maidens and young men, the reverend elders, the feeble crones, who shivered already in the strange ominous chill that pervaded the air, the hardy hunters, the no less hardy shepherds, or rather deer-herds: old and young were gazing with a common purpose and a common intensity of feeling upon the sinking luminary. All kinds of wild imaginings, all manner of poetic memories, rushed in upon my mind as the sun approached the horizon, and prepared for the final plunge. The wild and mystic verses of Tegner, perhaps suggested by that very spectacle of the death of the northern sun, recurred to me with boding clearness. I began to wonder whether I had not been very rash and absurd in wishing to stop a winter in Lapland, like a mole in its burrow. I began to sigh after Gloucestershire, where the sun would shine out, many a day, on the crisp snow and frost-silvered boughs, when I should be left in Cimmerian darkness. Plunge! the red sun had flashed down below the horizon. A heavy twilight settled, as if by magic, over the fair landscape, still gilded by the smiles of summer. Alas! the good fairy, so beneficent, so bright, in her rainbow robe, studded with flowers, was gone, and King Frost was to reign over her devastated realms. Hark! the long wailing cadences of the sweet sad chant—an old, old heathen chant, of the days when Freya was worshipped, Freya, at once Venus and Summer of this far remote race—in which the Laplanders bewail the parting day! Now for the long, long night! Already, as we turned to quit the hill, after straining our eyes until the last faint glow had died away too—already an icy breeze had sprung up from the dim north-west, and I shivered and wrapped my cloak round me at the sudden sensation of cold. 'It is the snow-wind,' said an old Laplander, as we paced down to the village; 'no more flowers for the lasses to braid in their hair this year.'

I must confess that I felt uncommonly like a frightened child left alone in the dark, and regretted my whim for staying among the Laps. Nay, but for very shame, I believe I should have proposed to hire Peter Wow's boat, before the ice should seal up mere and river, and start, like a bird of passage, in pursuit of the sun. The country seemed to me to change in the unwonted twilight; the familiar rocks of the glen, the far-away moorlands, the pine thickets, assumed a weird aspect; even the faces of my entertainers looked strange and grotesque, and their pigmy figures impish, in the deep shadow. Then, too, the singular feeling that all this was not a dream—that it was real waking life—that I had actually seen the sun go down into an obscurity that was to last for the better part of a year—and that I was going to try and while away a winter-night that would have given time to Scherazade herself to exhaust a quarter of her budget of stories—all this bewildered me. But that night there were high revels held among the dwellers in

caves. Peter Wow, as chief of the village, entertained all the beauty and wealth (all the ugliness and poverty as well) of Kublitz in his hospitable halls underground. Torches blazed and sputtered; lamps, fed by seal-oil and deer's fat, were lighted, and hung to every bracket and projection through all the subterranean dwelling; and at a very early hour, the monotonous but impatient beating of the Lapland drum summoned the guests. All Kublitz was there, young and old, in holiday garb. There were games and sweetmeats for the children, dancing for the lads and lasses, and abundance of tobacco, gossip, and strong liquors for the seniors of the village. A pet reindeer—a lovely milk-white creature, almost hidden by the flowers with which it was garlanded—was led through the rooms by a rope of roses held by six young maidens. Six young hunters followed, each with a drawn sword, with which they were presently to figure in the ancient sword-dance of Scandinavia. The orchestra, composed of the strangest-looking instruments, still managed—for the Laps are a very musical people—to discourse sweet sounds, now of wild pathos, now almost maddeningly gay and exciting. Such hearty, vigorous, agile dancing I never beheld. Even in the gayest circles of Stockholm, a primitive capital, in which the elegant world has not yet become too languid for enjoyment, those Lapland dancers would have been wonders, and yet there was nothing boisterous or ungainly in their movements. Indeed, these were as sprightly and almost as small as fairies, and had something of the fawn-like elasticity and grace of childhood in all their motions. I felt the thrill of the music awake forgotten sympathies, and half wished to dance too, and regretted that I was too mature and too bulky to be a fitting partner for one of those lithe, small-limbed elfins of Lapland, who were sweeping so trippingly past me. Peter Wow did offer to procure me a partner; but I saw, by the twinkle of his eye, that he meant nothing more than a jest, and I should have felt, like Gulliver, afraid of crushing the whole Liliputian company. Indeed, it was a marvellous sight that assembly of small folks under the level of the earth, and it put me in mind of what I had heard of the Daione Sheah of the Scottish legends, and their revelry within some haunted hill. I could hardly help fancying I was really a captive or a guest of a troop of carousing gnomes, or that, like the Rhymer, I had been borne away to Fairyland, and had but a faint prospect of revisiting the real daylight world again.

Peter Wow, the tallest man in the community, had attained the gigantic stature of five feet four, and, with his high red cap set jauntily on his gray locks, his enormous white beard and mustaches flowing down like a frozen river, and his uniform costume of reddish-brown cloth, looked uncommonly like the king of the Drows or Gnomes, as Norse superstitions describe him. The still more dwarfish assemblage presented every variety, from the grotesque and witchlike ugliness of the old women, to the infantine and diminutive beauty of some of the young girls. The children were almost all pretty and rosy of complexion, but age, it seems, comes on with terribly swift strides among these dwellers of the frozen world, as well as with the sun-scorched Asiatic; and I looked in vain for the pleasant matronly faces that never fail to meet the eye in a temperate climate. There seemed to be a quick transition from delicate youth to weird age. Some of the men were fine active little fellows, wonderfully strong, in spite of their pigmy stature, and full of life and fire. It has been essayed, more than once, to raise troops among the Laplanders; but in vain, for the little warriors cannot endure the ridicule of their big comrades of Swedish or Norse stock, and endless quarrels are sure to keep a garrison in hot water if a Lap is enlisted. There is the Swedish-Lapland corps of sharpshooters,

who serve on snow-shoes, and form a militia on the border; and there the sensitive little heroes are less exposed to be derided because their heads can barely touch the sixty-inch standard. The Laps profess to despise all Swedes, Norwegians, and Southerners generally, as a heavy and stupid race, whose large limbs and lofty forms are given them as a compensation for their scanty stock of brains. And indeed the Norsemen always say: 'He who deals with a Lap gets the worst of the bargain;' for the small folks have wonderful acuteness with all their simple bearing. But I believe that in their secret hearts the tiny tribe value size and height above all things. I know Peter Wow was prodigiously vain because his head was within an ace of being level with my shoulder; and I think many a young fellow would have bartered his youth for my six feet of perpendicular elevation, which never gained its owner any remarkable popularity elsewhere.

The next morning, I had a surprise indeed. A shout from the upper earth aroused me, and scrambling to the outer air, I beheld the rocks, the black pine copse, the illimitable moorlands, one dazzling, all-pervading sheet of blinding snow. All gone! the fair flowers, the song-birds, the uncultured fruits that offered their profusion everywhere, blooming heather, and green grass, all gone! buried, until next summer brought back the daylight, beneath a spotless unvarying shroud of virgin snow. To my great relief, it was not as dark as I had expected. A sort of hazy shimmering light prevailed, like moonbeams through a mist. The northern wind blew keen; and even as I gazed, the blinding snow-flakes came whirling down again, and seemed to bury the dead summer deeper at every instant.

'They are plucking the wild goose's feathers finely up there, north,' said Peter Wow, unconscious that his proverb was a British as well as a Lapland one.

We all laid by our summer clothes, put on our manifold wraps of fur and woollen, and betook us to winter avocations. And now came a strange season, when it was hard to say whether it was day or night, or both, or neither. The lamps were never suffered to go out; the fiddles and drums, the bone-flute and the musk-ox's horn, were never silent for three consecutive hours; and there seemed no regular times for meals, or sleep, or work, or recreation. On the contrary, music, and such simple labours as could be performed underground, and dancing and cooking, to say nothing of eating, drinking, and gossiping, went on in a promiscuous fashion through the twenty-four hours of what would, down south, have been a legal day. If any one felt tired or sleepy, he or she went to sleep; the hungry ate, the thirsty drank; the perpetual fires constantly cooked the most outlandish messes; the fiddles and drums went on as if self-acting; the reindeer were fed, tended, and milked; birchen bowls were carved, horn-trinkets chiseled, and stories related to gaping listeners, all at once, and all for ever. I left off looking at my watch at all, except mechanically. I went about as a sleep-walker might; I dreamed standing. I passed great part of that wonderful winter not unpleasantly, but in a sort of amiable nightmare. Of course, I saw no newspapers: the world might wag as it pleased. It was in the daylight—I in the dark. Of course, I received no letters: the post-courier was shut out, along with the sun, and I was the tenant of a strange lamp-lit, moonshiny world.

We were not always underground. In the fine weather, the reindeer were driven out to browse on the lichens and mosses, from which they scratched away the snow with their fore-feet. There were hunting-parties, too, when we chased and slew the white wolves, the white hares, the martens, the deer, the birds, all and every one in their winter livery of white. There was the ermine chase, and the chase of the white fox, and a grand battle with an old giant



of a bear, who presumed on the superstitious respect the Laps have for 'Old Grandfather Wizard,' as they call him, and robbed the storehouses, until his thefts became unbearable. The wolf-hunts were rather dangerous; but the bear was a terrible fellow; he wounded four of our best hunters, cowed the dogs with his ursine hugs, and nearly beat the whole community, when a lucky shot laid him low. And then there were the glorious drives! Oh, the wild excitement of sweeping over the frozen snow in a deer-drawn sledge, swift as a hawk on the wing, every bell jangling, and the wild driver singing as he cheers on his antlered team, that fly like the wind over the dazzling white moorlands! The worst of it is, it takes away your breath uncommonly; and when I waxed confident, and would drive personally, I was run away with, of course, upset with an awful purl into a drift five fathom deep, and dug out ignominiously, amid much laughter of the little folks, who greatly crowded over clumsy Gulliver. Still, the drives were famous fun. I was frost-bitten twice, and revived by a snow-rubbing; but, worse, I was struck with snow-blindness, for I had to pass a fortnight in my cabin in absolute darkness, and was not the happier for the reflection that my own obstinacy in refusing to wear snow-spectacles had brought this agreeable seclusion upon me. But the kind little folks bustled about me, and told me the most wonderful stories of gnomes, witches, geni, and so forth, all with perfect childish belief and gravity, and sang and played to me, and lightened my loneliness considerably. When I recovered, I was thankful for the spectacles, and never suffered from the glare any more.

So the winter wore on. The Laps were always kind, gentle, and gay, in their strange semi-pagan way, though I trembled lest I should really be ill, beyond cure of their simple remedies, and abandoned to the wizard, a sort of medicine-man among them, who beats his magic drum, and mutters spells over the sick, as among the American Indians. Not that the Laps are idolaters now, although, in 1700, Bishop Gunner found a few heathens still among them, who worshipped a black stone. On the contrary, we had a pastor of the Swedish Church at Kublitz. But he was a native Lap, a meek little man, who had half forgotten his small stock of learning acquired at Upsala; and I am sure he put perfect faith in the wizard, as the latter moved about, haughty and mysterious, in his blue magic dress, and was not the sort of priest to eradicate the superstitions which he avowedly shared. Besides the wizard, we possessed two witches, impish crones, in pointed caps of white fox-skin, who derived fees and much reverence from the fears of the community. Yet my hosts looked on themselves as civilised folks, compared with their more northern neighbours. 'All bad tribes up north,' Peter Wow would say in his broken Swedish; 'shoot you if you go there, for fear you come for harm! Cannibals up there! and you know the Lapland muskets never miss!' Indeed, they very seldom do miss, at a moderate range.

But the Merry Dancers! I was going to omit the most strangely splendid sight that ever astonished my eyes, and to which a whole Royal Academy of artists could never do justice. The Northern Lights, the customary auroras and meteors, were unusually splendid about mid-winter; but once, as I was returning from a sledge-excursion, an exclamation from my guide made me start. I shall never forget the scene. The heavens were one vast pavilion of many-coloured light: blue, orange, fiery red, deep violet, now paved with fiery gold, now spangled with lustrous gems, all blended in one glowing mass; while beneath, and touching the snowy plain, wheeled and sparkled, as in fantastic dance, a hundred columns of prismatic fire, that seemed the creation of some wild dream. These were the Merry Dancers, the wondrous

Lights of the North. Ah! it was a pleasant winter; and I protest that I was half sorry when we all went up the hill again, and hailed the rising sun, and day and summer came pouring in at once; and the boat was prepared, and I bade my gnome hosts adieu, and went off to the daylight, open air, Gloucestershire world again.

#### ENGLAND'S LITTLE INCUMBRANCE.

THE popular notion which attributes the existence of what Mr Disraeli so pleasantly calls a fleabite, entirely to the genius of the great filibuster of 1688, does rank injustice to his predecessors on the throne. It is true, it was in the reign of Silent William that Exchequer bills were first issued, life and terminable annuities granted, and the national debt moulded into its present shape; but the practice of anticipating revenue by borrowing—the foundation of the grand superstructure—came in with William the Norman himself, or originated with his immediate successors.

At first these loans were raised by the authority of the crown alone, no interest being paid for the accommodation. Tangible, or what modern advertisers term 'available security,' was often required from royal clients by the money-lenders. Henry III. having borrowed 5000 marks from the Earl of Cornwall, bound over all his Jews—that wealthy, persecuted race being apparently looked upon as the king's own—to pay to the earl, in certain instalments, the sums of 3000 marks, under a penalty of L500 for every default, power being given to the earl to distraint upon their goods and persons, if need were. The expulsion of the Jews in the following reign deprived the crown of this ready resource. Henry V., at a loss for funds wherewith to carry out his designs against France, obtained L500 from the Bishop of Worcester and the city of Coventry, depositing with the lenders, as a pledge of repayment, his great Skelton collar, garnished with four rubies, four great sapphires, thirty-two great pearls, and fifty-three lesser ones. The hero of Agincourt never redeemed his collar, and it was not till the sixth year of his successor that it rejoined the royal insignia. Henry VI. pawned the crown jewels again and again, in order to raise money to carry on the contest with his rival of the White Rose.

The securities given by the crown consisted of privy seals, letters-patent, and debentures—so called from the acknowledgment of the debt beginning with the word 'debentur.' The Jews used, for the same purpose, written instruments called chirographs, one-half of which document was kept in the king's chest; if this counterpart could not be found in that repository when the chirograph was presented for payment, the latter was nothing better than waste paper or parchment. But the security most commonly employed was that of the tally, the only instrument by which the Exchequer acknowledged the receipt of money. The tally was a stick of well-dried, well-seasoned hazel, cut square, and uniform at end and in the shaft. The sum of money which it represented was cut in notches by the cutter, and written upon two sides of it by the writer of tallies. The tally was cleft in the middle with a knife and mallet by the chamberlains, each half having a superscription and a half part of the notch or notches. One part, called the tally, was delivered to the person lending the money, the other, the counter-tally, being retained. When the tally and counter-tally came afterwards to be joined, they fitted so exactly that there could be no doubt of their genuineness.

Henry VI. was the first monarch who contrived to shift the burden of debt from his own shoulders to those of his subjects; the authority of parliament being given to the king's council to make securities for the creditors of the crown in 1429, 1433, and 1436; and yet in 1450 his majesty owed L372,000 more

than he knew how to pay. Parliament again came to his aid, and drew upon the purse of the nation for the amount. In the twenty-first year of the reign of Henry VIII., the Commons, considering that divers of the king's subjects held securities for great sums of money which had been expended in the public service, repaid the advances, and released the king from all obligations regarding them. James I., during the earlier part of his reign, borrowed money at the 'ordinary' interest of 10 per cent.; in 1625 the rate was reduced by act of parliament to 8 per cent.

Another method of anticipating revenue was by the issue by the Exchequer of tallies of pro, resembling the more ancient tallies of profer given to the sheriffs, in acknowledgment of the prepayment of the issues of their bailiwicks. When parliament assumed the exclusive right of taxing the nation, it made provision, from time to time, for anticipating the produce of the taxes, either by allowing discount for their prepayment, or by borrowing money to be repaid as the revenue accrued. Upon the quarrel between Charles I. and the parliament resolving itself into a trial by battle, the parliament issued an ordinance, declaring it would be an acceptable service if all good subjects would advance, by way of loan, such sums as they would have been assessed under a tonnage and poundage bill, which having passed both Houses, lacked only the royal assent to become law; all such good citizens being rewarded for their patriotism by a deduction of 15 per cent. being made on their several assessments. Charles, equally distressed for the sinews of war, had recourse to the farmers of the customs; not only did he borrow largely from them, but he compelled them to become personally bound for loans contracted in other quarters. In return, they received a three years' extension of their lease, with power to repay themselves with interest, by deducting certain sums from the Customs receipts every year. This proved a bitter bad bargain for the farmers. The parliament of 1640 refused to recognise the transaction, and handed over the Customs to other parties, leaving those who had put their faith in Charles without a chance of reimbursing themselves, and at the mercy of the creditors to whom they had made themselves responsible. Sir Paul Pindar and several others died in prison; those who survived until the Restoration, were re-installed in their old offices, and accepted £200,000, in discharge of the much larger amount justly due to them.

In 1664, a more systematic method of anticipating income was adopted. In order to supply the king with ready money, all persons willing to lend money, or furnish any necessities to the crown upon credit, received a tally by way of acknowledgment, and were paid 6 per cent. interest per annum till the principal was returned. The act authorising this was passed, said the Speaker, in the hope that 'as the rivers do naturally empty themselves into the sea, the veins of gold and silver in this nation will plentifully run into this ocean, for the maintenance of his majesty's just sovereignty on the seas.' His hope was fulfilled. Wealthy people eagerly advanced money to the Exchequer upon the security of the supplies voted by parliament, and were gradually repaid as the produce of the taxes flowed into the treasury; but in eight years' time Charles was in such pecuniary difficulties, that he offered to bestow the treasurership upon the discoverer of any way of extrication. Clifford was the winner of the prize. His plan had at least the merit of simplicity; he shut up the Exchequer, and instead of repaying the money advanced upon its security, issued only the interest due thereon. General distrust was the natural consequence; bankruptcies became the order of the day; merchants and traders stood not upon the order of their going, but went at once, and commerce was brought to a stand-still. The national creditors were thus defrauded of £1,328,526; the interest of this sum, amounting to £79,711, the king charged

upon his hereditary revenue. At his death, the payment was stopped. After many years' litigation, judgment was pronounced against the crown; but an act was passed in 1699, declaring, that in lieu of the crown being chargeable with the payment of the 6 per cent., the Excise should be made answerable for the payment of 3 per cent. per annum upon the sum mentioned in the letters-patent, subject to being redeemable upon the payment of £664,263. The twenty-five years' interest properly due to the patentees, together with their original capital, amounted to £3,423,526, so that they lost no less than £2,800,000 by the transaction. The principal of £664,263 still forms part of our funded debt—the only portion of it contracted prior to the Revolution, at which time the whole outstanding debt of the country, including some £300,000 arrears of pay due to the army and navy, did not exceed £384,888, 6s. 9d. The ordinary annual revenue was £1,580,000, and the average expenditure, £1,700,000.

The glorious Revolution inaugurated a new financial era; with it commenced the system under which our national debt has increased from a paltry eighty-five thousand pounds to above seven hundred millions. The extraordinary military expenditure of the new monarch, necessitated not only increased taxation, but the raising of large sums upon tallies of anticipation; a means so extravagantly used, that by the end of 1696 the amount due upon outstanding tallies exceeded the funds available for their discharge by more than four millions. They fell, as a matter of course, considerably below par, and to save the national credit, their liquidation was provided for by an act called *The First General Mortgage*. Previous to this, it had become evident that some other means of borrowing money must be found; accordingly, in 1692, government was authorised to raise one million on life and tontine annuities, the lenders receiving 10 per cent. per annum for seven years, and afterwards 7 per cent. on the lives of their nominees, with benefit of survivorship till the number was reduced to seven; or the option of receiving an annuity for one life at 14 per cent. Two years afterwards, £300,000 was raised upon annuities for one, two, and three lives, at 14, 12, and 10 per cent. respectively. One million was also raised by lottery upon annuities for sixteen years at 14 per cent.; and in the same year, the Bank of England was incorporated, and the foundation of our funded debt laid, by the borrowing from its corporation of £1,200,000 at 8 per cent., with £4000 allowed for the expense of the house, making an annuity of £100,000 at 8½ per cent.—an interest reduced from time to time till brought down to its present rate of 3 per cent. In 1695, the holders of single life-annuities were allowed, on advancing an additional sum equivalent to four and a half years' purchase, to convert them into long annuities of ninety-six years' certain duration; if the annuitant declined, any one could take the long term at five years' purchase, subject to the original life-annuity; and so all the single life-annuities were gradually converted into long annuities.

Spite of these strenuous efforts to place the finances in a satisfactory condition, 1696 saw the government almost at its wit's end for money—the difficulties of the situation aggravated by the commercial distress occasioned by the calling in of the old clipped silver before new coin had been provided to supply its place. King William, busy in the Low Countries, was ever crying for more. 'If you cannot devise expedients to send contributions or procure credits,' he writes, 'all is lost, and I must go to the Indies.' A little later, he urges the anticipation of the land-tax, meeting all objections as to the illegality of the procedure by declaring: 'In such extreme necessity, we must not be too scrupulous.' Pressed so hardly for that which he knew not how to obtain, the Duke of Shrewsbury writes bitterly to Russell: 'You have left us in the saddest condition that ever people were in; an army

abroad, a fleet and army at home, to maintain, and neither friends nor money to do it.' In these exigent circumstances, Montagu, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, came to the rescue. An act for the establishment of a National Land Bank passed the Commons, in which Montagu inserted provisions for imposing new duties on salt, and borrowing £2,564,000 upon the credit thereof, either by tallies of loan and orders of repayment at 7 per cent., or by 'indented bills of credit,' issued by the Exchequer, for any even number of pounds sterling as might be most convenient to those ready to accept them. These bills bore interest not exceeding 3d. per diem, and were payable on demand, the Treasury being authorised to cancel the bills as paid off, reissue them, or issue new bills in lieu of them, as was deemed most convenient. Holders were privileged to commute them for a perpetual annual payment of 7 per cent., redeemable upon the return of the principal. The first issue of Exchequer bills took place on the 14th July 1696, and although £1,500,000 was authorised by the act, only £159,169 was actually issued; of which only £59,364 was outstanding at the end of the year. In 1697, a fresh issue of Exchequer bills took place, to the amount of £1,199,990, bearing interest at £7, 12s. per cent. per annum, the greater portion not exceeding £10 in value.

Tallies of pro were issued by the authority of parliament for the first time in 1696, for the purpose of defraying the household expenses of the king and royal family. In 1698, tallies of anticipation were issued to pay off a loan of two millions contracted with the newly constituted East India Company. Others were issued in the following year, to cover any deficiencies of ways and means under the Appropriation Act of that date. At the conclusion of William's reign, the whole national debt, which had reached as high as fifteen millions, amounted to £12,552,486, of which £3,200,000 was funded.

In 1707, England was engaged in the War of the Spanish Succession, to meet the expenses of which contest, Exchequer bills were issued for £1,500,000. These were payable at the Exchequer for any account, and exchangeable for cash at the Bank of England, which was paid 4½ per cent. per annum for circulating the bills. No interest was indorsed upon them by the Exchequer, that duty devolving upon the Bank. Two years afterwards, this issue was cancelled, and commuted into a debt due to the Bank of England of £1,775,027, 17s. 10½d., with interest at 6 per cent., payable from the house-duties. This is the first instance of the funding of Exchequer bills. A new issue in 1709 were for a time divided into 'non-specie bills,' receivable on account of taxes or loans at the Exchequer, and 'specie bills,' reissued by the Exchequer, and payable on demand at the Bank; a distinction abolished in 1711, by making all of them payable on demand. Up to this time, no addition had been made to the capital of the public debt beyond the amount actually borrowed. Towards the end of Anne's reign, the difficulty of raising money became so great that recourse was had to obtaining loans by means of lotteries, in which every ticket was entitled to a capital equal to the sum advanced, and the prize-tickets to a large additional capital, both bearing interest at 6 per cent., and repayable in thirty-two years from funds allocated for the purpose. In six lottery loans raised between 1711 and 1714, the amount advanced was £9,000,000; the prizes, £2,723,910—making an addition to the capital of public debt of £11,723,910. It was in 1711 that the funded debt first exceeded the unfunded, which it did by a million; on Anne's death in 1714, they stood respectively at £27,820,321 and £8,355,139; the national liabilities having been trebled in the thirteen years of her reign.

In 1719, provision was first made for exchanging residuary Exchequer bills for new ones. The first monarch of 'Brunswick's royal line' left the debt at

£52,523,923; an amount nearly doubled in the thirty-four years' reign of his successor. Then came the days when George III. was king—the American rebellion, the long death-struggle with Napoleon, with its absorbing subsidies and usurious loans. In 1815, the national debt reached its maximum of £861,039,960, having increased during the fifty-five years of Father George's rule at an average rate of thirteen and a half millions per annum! When he was gathered to his rest, it had been reduced by some six-and-twenty millions. At the end of George IV.'s reign in 1830, it had still further declined to £784,803,997; the Sailor King left it some three millions the worse; but under our present deservedly loved monarch it was gradually reduced, till it reached its minimum point since 1812—£769,082,549. This was in the financial year 1853-54, just before the breaking out of the war with Russia, which left us with the debt increased to £808,108,722, although the annual charge upon it was less by a million than on the smaller debt of 1837. The last alternative of kings has proved a monstrously costly alternative to all nations, and to none more than our own. For example, we had added to our national debt, by the War of the Spanish Succession, lasting 11 years, £22,370,202; by the wars of Right of Search and Austrian Succession, 8 years, £29,314,632; by the Seven Years' War, £60,782,368; by the American War, 8 years, £115,901,732; by the French War (interrupted by Treaty of Amiens), 22 years, £421,375,628; by the Russian War, 2 years, £39,026,173—or seven wars only, extending over some sixty years, have increased our obligations by the nice little sum of six hundred and eighty-eight millions, leaving increased taxation out of the question altogether. Truly, these 'butchers' bills,' calculated from the massive columns of the Blue-book to which we are indebted for the facts herein stated, are terrible items in our national ledger.

Since 1856, a reduction of some three millions has been effected in the total amount of the public debt of Great Britain; but with the time for turning swords into pruning-hooks as far off as ever, and with the country awake to the imperative necessity of being prepared for any contingency, costly defences loom in no distant future; and as we may fairly make posterity pay its proportion for safety, there is little hope of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt being able to do much in that way for many years to come.

#### THE TURKISH BATH.

I know what the Panacea is: it isn't education, it isn't prize-fighting, and it isn't even volunteering—it's the Turkish bath. Education is a very good cure, I've no doubt, for rogues and vagabonds, and ruffians who commit the crime of hunger; prize-fighting is a healthy and ennobling occupation for people made of cast iron; and volunteering is strongly recommended by the faculty to young men of means who suffer from loss of appetite; but the Panacea for the million is the Turkish bath. Methuselah, it is now generally allowed, owed his length of days to this practice. I know that an ingenious captain of Artillery has written a book, in which he endeavours to account for the nine centuries of that patriarch in another way. *He* holds, and he is under the impression that he *proves*, that the earth grows and has gone on growing ever since the creation; that in the days of Methuselah it was a very diminutive sphere indeed; that the days and years were proportionately short; and that, consequently, Methuselah was by no means a long-lived man, reckoning according to our present scale of days and years. But the majority of scientific men deny this theory, and adopt the



Turkish-bath explanation. The bard, I am aware, with that disregard for truth which is one of the privileges of the poetic race, asserts unblushingly that

Brandy cures the gout, the colic, and the phthisis,  
And is to all men the very best of physic.

But the user of the Turkish bath needs no physic of any description, and inveighs against stimulants of all kinds; nay, it has been asserted with some vehemence, and maintained with some degree of argument, that the man (or woman) who should daily take a Turkish bath, would stand in need of neither medicine nor raiment, and very little food would be necessary. Oxygen is the one thing needful, and the regular user of the Turkish bath gets plenty of that. I took my first in Palace Street, Pimlico. There's a chapel next door, but they don't charge anything extra on that account, though you can hear the organist practising quite distinctly. Now, the appearance of the bath outside is as if it were built of some crumbly sort of stone, and upon it is printed, 'The Turkish Bath,' in red letters, for somehow in England red is associated with everything Turkish. There are two entrances—one for gentlemen, and the other for ladies. What they do on the ladies' side, I can't say, but I've no doubt things are conducted in very much the same manner as upon the gentlemen's; and the fashion hereof is as follows:

As soon as you enter, you are requested to sit upon a form, pull off your shoes, and insert your feet into a pair of slippers *à la Turque*, fashioned out of an old pair of American goloshes or 'rubbers' (at least *mine* were); not that it is by any means necessary, but it looks Turkish. Then, much as you may admire that sentiment of Ancient Pistol's which proclaims the baseness of the 'slave who pays,' you must submit to slavery for the nonce, and abase yourself to the tune of three-and-sixpence; whereupon a ticket of admittance is put into your hand, and you are politely requested to mount, as well as your Turkish slippers, will allow you, into an upper chamber. This chamber has windows in the roof only. These windows are all open, and at your entrance, you are a little scared at observing what at first appear to you corpses in winding-sheets lying upon red-covered ottomans. After a few moments, however, you recover sufficient self-possession to be aware that some of the corpses are reading newspapers, and many smoking. They repose at full length with a sheet partially thrown round them, and girt about the loins with what would in South Africa be considered a very handsome evening-dress, either of a red or yellow colour. One of these 'evening-dresses,' together with a sheet, is then thrust into your hands. You accept both with thanks, grin feebly at the donor, and take the liberty of asking if you are expected to imitate the apparently insane conduct of the gentlemen whom you see lying about, and every mother's son of whom you are willing to bet more than you can afford, will catch his death of cold. To your relief, you find that no such sacrifice is required of you at present for your three-and-sixpence. Having given up your valuables into the care of the superintendent, your attention is directed to a number of square compartments, or apartments, protected from the public gaze by red curtains. Into one of these you are inducted, and recommended to reduce yourself to a state of nudity; to gird yourself with the red or yellow 'ap'on' before mentioned; to throw the sheet, ghost-like, about you, and then descend the steps you just now ascended. Arrived at the bottom, you are directed to turn to the right, pull aside a red curtain, and exchange your Turkish slippers for a pair of wooden clogs. A door is then pushed open, you are told to walk in, and do so, but for an instant feel disposed to back out again at the double. The temperature of the room is 120°, but

that is comparatively a trifle: it is the spectacle you behold which appals you. In the first place, the room is darkened; through the gloom, you dimly discover, seated upon wooden stools—as it were of repentance—placed against the walls, and over a grating, through which comes the hot air, nude figures, both fat and thin. They sit and glare, as you take your place upon a vacant stool in a corner, and spring up on the spot with a cry of pain, for you've not been in the habit of sitting on the hob, and prefer a chair 'with just the chill off'; there they sit and glare, and perspire, and pant. Their faces are red, their veins distended; and that stout old gentleman who weighs, on a rough calculation, about forty-seven stone, and looks like Hercules in very bad condition, gazes piteously at the stream which is pouring from his fat. After a few moments, you are sufficiently acclimatised to the temperature to sit down quietly and observe the operations. Your first impression is decidedly uncomfortable; you can't help thinking you must have got into a torture-chamber by mistake; your memory brings back all the tales you have read about the Spanish Inquisition, and scenes from Mr Ainsworth's *Tower of London* come floating before your mental vision; for in the middle of the room wherein you are sitting, are what you take to be two racks; upon them are stretched at full length two human figures, and over these a-straddle stand two ghastly executioners; an occasional sigh or groan from the recumbent figures aids the horrible delusion. But after a while your eyesight becomes clearer, your nerves stronger, and your imagination duller, so that the racks soften down into simple wooden tables or dressers, the victims into voluntary patients, and the grim executioners into civil, careful, and tender operators.

Being now in a position, mentally and corporeally, to look about you, you perceive that the room in which you are has three doors: one by which you entered; another on your right as you enter, which leads into a sort of yard, the temperature whereof is about 70°; and a third upon your left as you enter, which opens into another room, heated to the somewhat alarming height of 180°. Of course, it is only by degrees that you gain all this knowledge. Hints are dropped from time to time by perspiring neighbours, which enable you to make up your mind that yonder room is still hotter than that in which you sit, and that you must get baked there before you can consider yourself 'thoroughly done.' Then you are aware of a list of Regulations, which you rise up and read. They are six in number; and, if memory serve me truly, the first is a recommendation 'to remain in the first or intermediate room until a general perspiration takes place.' The second is to this effect: 'If the heat be disagreeable or oppressive, wash the head with a little warm water, and the feet and hands with cold;' and, as the heat is disagreeable and oppressive, you proceed at once to act upon it; then feeling, or fancying you feel, a little better, you peruse the remaining regulations. The third, in a teetotal spirit, accords you the kind permission 'to drink cold water freely, if you feel inclined, as soon as the body becomes moist.' The fourth is a warning to you 'to take care and cool thoroughly before dressing, and whilst cooling, to expose the body as much as possible to the air.' The fifth advises you 'to repose as much as you can whilst in the bath, and to avoid all exciting topics of conversation.' The sixth it is rather difficult to comprehend, by reason of its grammatical structure, the complication of conjunctions being worthy of Thucydides himself. I can only give it as it is printed, to the best of my recollection: 'The proper time for taking a bath is either before meals, and not for less than two hours after a hearty one.' The first part is sufficiently intelligible, but the last is too much for most scholars; however, the best way would be never to take one at all after a meal, and

then you will be quite safe. After this short trial of the effect produced upon the human body at a temperature of 120° by a little reading, and discovering the result to be a gentle perspiration, you, in accordance with regulation one, enter the more fiercely heated room. You look at the thermometer, and find that you are actually enduring a temperature of 180°. You sit down upon a board placed upon a marble slab, as you see other people sitting, and you take particular care not to touch the marble itself with any part of your body, for the sudden hop, the starting eyes, the twisted mouth, and the profane ejaculation of the gentleman opposite, the calf of whose leg came into contact with the marble, lead you to the conclusion that it isn't agreeable. In point of fact, the board is, to say the least, quite hot enough, and you're not quite sure you're not a fool for sitting on it; you think there is a great deal of reason in the remark of the gentleman next to you, who mutters that it's quite hot enough for *him*; and you listen with considerable interest to the short-necked gentleman, with very prominent veins, who asks in a husky voice if that sort of thing ever brings on apoplexy.

When you think you have reduced yourself by perspiration as nearly to a skeleton as is convenient, you retreat to the 'intermediate' room. You are then taken in hand by an 'operator.' He requests you to sit down upon one of the 'dressers'; he then takes hold of your right hand, pulls the arm out sharply, tugs at your thumb and each of your fingers, striving to 'crack' the joints, and pinches and kneads the muscles. Afterwards, he repeats the operation upon your left hand and arm. Now he jumps up behind you, rubs down your neck, presses upon your shoulders, and bidding you support your hands upon the 'dresser,' passes the palm of his hand heavily down from shoulder to wrist. Next, he tells you to lie upon your back, putting a sort of block under your head, to support it. He leans the weight of his body upon your chest, and passes his hand over your ribs and all the muscles from the neck to the waist; he rubs your thighs, pulls your legs and toes, and twists your ankles; lastly, he turns you over, back uppermost, and leans upon all parts of your back; runs what feels very like his elbow down from the nape of your neck between your shoulder-blades as far as the string of the 'ap'on' you have on; pulls all the muscles you have 'aft' with thumb and finger, as one stretches a piece of India-rubber; pinches your calves; and with a parting wrench of the left leg, lets you know you're 'done.' Being 'done,' you sit down for a minute or two till the 'washer' is ready for you.

He awaits you in the third room, or court, or back-kitchen, or yard, or whatever is the proper name for it. He will seat you upon a form, cover you all over with Castilian soap, and then wash you with warm water. During this time, he will most likely question you after his kind, thus:

'This your first bath, sir?'

'Yes.'

(Sneeringly.) 'I thought so.'

'Why?'

'Why, you're so alarmin' dirty.'

(Uneasily.) 'Oh! am I? I didn't know that. I have a bath every morning.'

'What! a water-bath?'

'Yes.'

'That counts for it—that ain't a bath; you might take that sort o' bath all day, and yet be as dirty as a chimney-sweep.'

Not feeling on safe ground, you close the conversation. The 'washer' requests you to stand up, empties the tub of warm water in which you have been washed over your head, and proceeds to behave in a manner which excites a suspicion, on your part, that something unpleasant is coming. He begs you will stand as far back as you can; he then catches hold of a

gutta-percha tube, at one end of which is that part of a watering-pot which is pierced with holes, while the other end is fastened in the wall, and communicates, you have a horrid fancy, with a tank of cold water. Your fancy has not deceived you, for in a moment a gelid stream is poured over feet and legs, and chest and back, and, peradventure, head. This sudden attack is a little bewildering at first, and takes away the breath, causing any remarks you may have to make to issue forth in a broken form, accompanied by frequent gasps; but before it is over, you really enjoy it. You are now sent back into the warm rooms again; and after remaining there a few minutes, until you become dry, you make your exit by the door by the which you entered. Your clogs or pattens are now taken off; your slippers put on; a fresh 'ap'on' is tied around your middle; your sheet is thrown round your shoulders; and you walk up stairs to the 'lying-in-state' room. You fling yourself upon an ottoman, throw your sheet off your chest and legs, call for a cigar and a cup of coffee, and believe yourself in Paradise. The sensations you experience are indescribable. So far from feeling the air from the open windows uncomfortable, you delight in it; you feel as though a weight had fallen from mind and body. In about half an hour, you find yourself thoroughly cooled; you go into your little compartment, dress yourself, recover your valuables, descend the stairs, put off your slippers, put on your shoes, and sally forth in an ecstasy.

But as no one with the full complement of wits ever goes a warfare without counting the cost, so a reasonable being takes a review of the charges he has been put to by his bath; and herein the man whose time is money, may fairly reckon the hours he spent. For my part, then, I entered at 4 p.m., and though, in obedience to the exhortation of regulation three, I drank six tumblers of water as soon as my body became moist, and employed all the means I could think of to bring on a perspiration, it was six o'clock before I shewed any marked symptom—indeed, I began to doubt whether the pores hadn't been forgotten when my particular skin was manufactured. Those superior beings who know all about the Turkish bath and the human skin, were horrified at the state of my hide, I daresay, and thought I must be a personification of the unclean thing; but I can only say, that if it's perspiration they want, I've plenty of that for them. Why, half an hour's fencing, or stick-playing, or rowing, makes me perspire ten times as much as two hours' basking in the bath-room; and I humbly submit that there may be persons for whom perspiration from exercise is more healthy than from artificial heat. I was two hours getting into a proper state for shampooing or kneading; I had to wait about a quarter of an hour, until the operator was ready to pinch, press, rub, and twist my limbs; I was about another quarter of an hour, I should think, having my limbs pinched, pressed, rubbed, and twisted, and my epidermis peeled off; I had to wait ten minutes before I was washed, and five minutes before I was dry, so that it was a quarter to seven when I arrived at the 'lying-in-state' room; and I was three-quarters of an hour getting cool and dressing. On the whole, then, I had been three hours and a half taking my bath; and though I am bound to say that, in a luxurious point of view, the delicious sensations I experienced at the end, and for at least an hour after it, were quite worth the while, in an industrial point of view, I very much fear it was time wasted. Moreover, I had expended 3s. 6d. for the bath, and 10d. for a cigar and a cup of coffee; not that the latter disbursements were absolutely necessary, but they seemed Turkish, and as I was in for it, I thought I might as well go the whole Turkish hog. Certainly, if you are in the habit of having all kinds of diseases and paying all sorts of doctors' bills, and you can be quit of both diseases and doctors by paying 4s. 4d. a week, it is



comparatively cheap; but my remarks apply to those who are blessed with generally good health.

Mr David Urquhart, a prophet who has met with the proverbial treatment of prophets in their own country, is the great advocate for the re-introduction into Britain of the Turkish bath; I say re-introduction, for if I read Mr Urquhart's book, called the *Pillars of Hercules*, aright, he states that it was introduced into Britain by the Romans, though it has now unhappily died out. Indeed, Turkish is an epithet given to it simply because it is in Turkey that it holds its ground tenaciously, whilst 'civilisation' has banished it in other countries. 'The result of progress,' says Mr Urquhart, 'is filth.' Witness the baths and wash-houses, the model lodging-houses, and the fact that nearly every man who can by any possibility do so, 'tubs' every morning, and uses flesh-brushes, or something equivalent. 'Pooh!' say Mr Urquhart and his adherents: 'my good friend, you're a born idiot. You think the use of water is to wash and make clean: not a bit of it. You believe with Pindar that ἀλίστην μιν ὕδωρ: never was such a mistake: ἀλίστην μιν ἥλιος: it is that which comes out of a man—which is in him and wants to come out—that defiles him. Perspiration brings that out, and hot air brings on perspiration; then *vive* hot air! Water is all very well for *ablution*—that is to say, to wash away what perspiration has elicited; but for every other purpose, you might as well drink it, and say you were cleansed. You, madam, whose skin is so fair and transparent to the uninitiated eye, that the ignorant would liken it to alabaster from Taurus, or marble from the quarries of Paros, will be grieved to hear, what is only too true, that you are really a nasty dirty creature, and that the labourer who perspires freely at his work, and wears his shirt for a whole week long, is your superior in cleanliness.' Now, I am no physiologist, but if perspiration be the *summum bonum*, or the one thing needful, it appears to my simple judgment perfectly unnecessary for persons in health to have recourse to artificial means; nature notoriously adapts herself to circumstances in a healthy subject. There are natural perspirations which I suppose expel secretions as well as artificial ones; and if the perspirer take care to use ablution afterwards, and rub off his epidermis with a glove, or flesh-brush, or even his own hand, I confess I can't see how he should fail to be as clean as any slipshod Turk that ever contented himself with one bath a week. And as for *Hummals*, I would be perfectly ready to back Mr Thomas Sayers, after a few weeks' training in his own style, against any three Turkish *Hummals*—one down, another come on—that ever perspired in a temperature of 200°. Moreover, it seems to me that if, as Mr Urquhart asserts, 'Rome was indebted to her strigil no less than to her sword for the conquest of the world,' the Turks have done wrong to omit the strigil whilst adopting the bath. It is quite clear that the bath alone is not sufficient to revive 'the sick man:' he had better try the strigil.

If Mr Urquhart could reintroduce the Roman or Turkish bath, he would certainly be a great benefactor, for it would be putting a great luxury within the reach of all classes. He believes the poor might obtain the bath at about twopence a head; but, then, how much time could they spare? Even were the building operatives to obtain the nine hours' boon, would they spend three and a half in a bath? Mr Urquhart is confident that the baths would supersede the gin-palaces. What a blessing were this to all but distillers! For my part, I'm afraid the gin-drinkers would have their bath and their 'blue-ruin' too, just as those who should set them an example have their Turkish bath and their claret. Mr Urquhart declares that it is not Islamism which prevents the use of spirituous liquors, but the bath. 'In Greece and Rome, in their worst times,' he says, 'there was neither

blue-ruin nor double stout:' of course, because they had the hot-air bath.

That the Turkish bath is a very good thing for those who suffer from rheumatism, neuralgia, cutaneous eruptions, &c.—who have too much fat, who take little or no exercise, who seldom perspire, and who can afford to pay three shillings and sixpence, and three hours and a half in time, for an exquisite indulgence—I have no doubt whatever. I myself cured a cold, and received three-quarters of an hour's intense gratification from it; but that I'm an unclean person if I don't have one once a week at least, I'll not acknowledge; and I can honestly state that I wasn't at all staggered, as they say you ought to be, at the immense quantity of dirt which accompanies your epidermis; there wasn't so much as I expected. You may say that I must have expected a great deal then; in fact, the attendant *did* observe that I came with rather exaggerated notions; but so it was. I was perfectly contented with my state of cleanliness, considering that I live in London.

There is an experiment now at Bradford, in the shape of a Turkish bath for working-men, and very successful, I believe, it has hitherto been. It will have already appeared, from what I have said, that there is but one part of the bath which *cannot* well be performed by yourself—that is, the shampooing. This difficulty is obviated by a whole family going together, and shampooing one another. It is this Bradford bath, I think, which is alluded to in a lecture delivered some short time since by a medical gentleman at Sheffield, who assures his audience that, after long continuance in the taking of Turkish baths, the human body becomes positively 'fragrant;' so that it may not be long before Breidenbach's *Wood Violet* is superseded by *Bouquet de Nigre au Naturel*, or *Double Extrait de Mille Hommes*. The same medical authority states, that the Turkish bath will cure consumption, if it is not too far advanced. It is hard to say how far that may be; but certainly a Turkish bath is more pleasant than cod-liver oil, even with orange wine; and if I were phthisical, as *Medicus* says he was, I would certainly try it. It is worth the attention of the Consumption Hospital.

#### PERSECUTED LITERATURE.

A PROPENSITY for persecution seems inherent in human nature. The Israelites, who had suffered so much at the hands of Egyptian taskmasters, in their day of power shewed no mercy to unbelieving Gentiles; Mohammed openly advocated conversion by sword and fire; and spite of the tie of a common faith, spite of the doctrine of mercy, long-suffering, and loving-kindness preached by the great Founder of Christianity, his followers have imitated the devotees of more blood-thirsty creeds, and

Burnt each other, quite persuaded

That all the apostles would have done as they did.

The physical annihilation of an opponent was so much more simple an operation than his intellectual overthrow; arguments might not always be ready, but the torch and the fagot were ever at hand; while to suppress the opinions of an adversary was more decisively conclusive than any attempt to confute them could possibly be.

The works of the early Christians received scant justice from imperial hands. Tiberius burned Eutychius's work on the Resurrection of the Dead, and Diocletian issued an edict, ordering all Christian books to be surrendered up to the civil authorities, or the latter were to seize and burn them. In the early part of the sixteenth century, the Emperor Maximilian directed a crusade against Hebrew literature: all Jewish books, Bibles excepted, were ordered to be burned, because they were filled with blasphemies against Christ. The Talmud was

an especial object of hatred—emperors, kings, and popes vied with each other in their fulminations against it; and twelve thousand copies were burned at one time in Cremona—a feat throwing the destruction of five thousand copies of the Koran by Cardinal Ximenes into the shade.

The Reformation gave occasion for a vast deal of book-burning. Tetzl would gladly have burned Luther himself; failing that, he gratified his feelings by publicly committing the great reformer's discourses and theses to the flames; a compliment the students of Wittenberg acknowledged by burning eight hundred copies of Tetzl's counter-theses in the market-place of that town. When Servetus, after once escaping from his enemies at Vienna, was retaken, and, by Calvin's instigation, burned at Geneva, his books and manuscripts shared the same fate.

In 1762, the *Emilie* of Jean Jacques Rousseau was burned by the common hangman at Geneva, and his *Contrat Social* afterwards experienced the same fate.

In England, the war upon books was commenced by the haughty, high-reaching son of the Ipswich butcher. The production of literary works had, until his time, been fostered rather than discouraged, and the importations of foreign presses facilitated. Wolsey, writhing under the severe personalities launched at him by Skelton and Roy, and foreseeing that the spirit of religious liberty would speed itself, on the wings lent to it by Faust, among a brave people awakening to a sense of their united might, warned the clergy that unless they exerted themselves to suppress printing, printing would most certainly suppress them. The astute cardinal left no means untried to prevent the circulation of anything he considered dangerous to either church or state. The king could enjoy the stinging satires levelled at his ambitious favourite sufficiently to protect the satirists from his vengeance, but the author of the *Defence of the Seven Sacraments* was not loath to make his adversaries know that he had at his command more powerful weapons than his pen. He accordingly issued an *Index Expurgatorius*, anathematising the new learning of Protestantism as heretical; and Wolsey went in solemn procession to St Paul's, and presided at the burning of the works of the Wittenberg monk, dreaming as little as his proud master, that in less than ten years from that time, the Defender of the Faith would quarrel with its high-priest, and prohibit the lucubrations of the advocate of papal supremacy as pestilent, infectious, and seditious! Among those who were busiest in this literary crusade, the Bishop of Durham was particularly prominent. His mortal fear of one 'little book brought by some folks from Newcastle,' led him to make a vain attempt to get all the ports of the kingdom closed against the offending volume. By another exploit, this prelate unwittingly earned the gratitude of the reformers. Upon the publication of the second edition of Tindal's Bible in 1538, a Tindalite, under sentence of execution, was offered a free pardon if he would divulge the name of the person by whose assistance the obnoxious version of the Scriptures had been reprinted. He accepted the condition, and to the astonishment of the chancellor, and the confusion of the Bishop of Durham, declared the bishop was the man, he having, by carefully buying up every copy of the first edition, supplied the funds for bringing out the second.

In the reign of Edward VI., the works of Peter Lombard, Duns Scotus, and Thomas Aquinas were carried upon biers, tumbled into bonfires, and burned in the market-place of Oxford. In the next reign, English Bibles and English commentaries on the Scriptures, of which the number was almost infinite, were treated in the same manner. Philip and Mary did not halt in the good work of suppressing any books tending to undermine their own temporal authority or the spiritual predominance of the pope,

and in the latter category were reckoned writings calculated to bring religious houses or the Society of Jesus into contempt. In 1555, the Stationers' Company received their charter, by which they were expressly authorised to search as often as it pleased them all houses occupied by printers, binders, stampers, or booksellers, for any works obnoxious to the state or their own interests, and to seize, burn, or convert such works to their own use. Three years afterwards, the following terse, and, as Strype calls it, 'terrible' proclamation was issued, and promptly acted upon:

'By the King and Queen.—Whereas divers books, filled with heresy, sedition, and treason, have of late and be daily brought into the realm out of foreign countries and places beyond the seas, and some also covertly printed within this realm, and cast abroad in sundry parts thereof; whereby not only God is dishonoured, but also encouragement is given to disobey lawful princes and governors; the king and queen's majesty, for redress hereof, do by their present proclamation declare and publish to all their subjects, that whosoever shall, after the proclamation hereof, be found to have any of the said wicked and seditious books, or finding them, doth not forthwith burn the same, without shewing or reading the same to any other person, shall in that case be reputed and taken for a rebel, and shall without delay be executed for that offence, according to the order of martial law. Given at our manor of St James, the 6th day of June 1558.' This curt and cruel edict is supposed to have been especially provoked by the appearance of a little work, by one Christopher Goodwin, on the lawfulness of disobeying superior powers, in which rebellion against the tyranny of the crowned bigots was openly advised and defended.

In Elizabeth's time, several political pamphlets, and under James, some libels on the powers that were, perished at the stake. Dr John Cowell published a law dictionary, called *The Interpreter*, and dedicated it to the Archbishop of Canterbury. In it he argued in favour of assimilating the laws of England to those of imperial Rome; these 'outlandish politics' attracted some notice, and drew down the censure of both Houses of Parliament; the author was taken into custody, and *The Interpreter* committed to the flames 'for asserting several points to the destruction of parliament.' In 1622, David Pare's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* was burned at London, Oxford, and Cambridge, by order of the privy council; and in 1640, the House of Lords commanded two works, Pocklington's *Altare Christianum*, and *Sunday no Sabbath*, to be burned by the common executioner in the city of London and at the two universities.

When parliament went up and the king went down, and Presbyterianism was for awhile in the ascendant, the old victims of Episcopal persecution, eager to do as they had been done by, became the bitter denouncers of what they called 'cursed intolerable toleration.' They who had cried out loudest against the decrees of the old licensors of the press, appointed new ones, by whom all antagonistic works were ruthlessly consigned to destruction. If the God-fearing Puritans proved so merciless, it is not to be wondered at that one of the first proceedings under the Restoration was the burning by the hangman of the Covenant and three acts of parliament: that for erecting the High Court of Justice by which Charles I. was tried and condemned, and that by which England was declared a Commonwealth. On the 13th of August, the king issued a proclamation, ordering all copies of *The Obstructors of Justice*, by J. Goodwin, late of Coleman Street, London, to be burned, coupling with it a much more famous work, the splendid *Defence of the People of England*, by one John Milton; but Charles would scarcely, like his successor James, have commanded Claude's account of the Massacre of St Bartholomew to be burned at the Exchange, to please the

French ambassador. Baxter's *Holy Commonwealth* received the same honour at Oxford in the very year of the Revolution.

After that important event, parliament looked with jealous eyes upon those who grounded the right of William and Mary to occupy the throne upon anything else but the will of the two Houses. In 1692, a pamphlet by C. Blount describing the king as a conqueror, was burned in Palace Yard. Three years previously, Bishop Burnet published a Pastoral Letter to his Clergy upon taking the oaths of allegiance to William and Mary. Carried away by his zeal, he wrote: 'Here was a war begun upon just and lawful grounds, and a war being so begun, it is the uncontroverted opinion of all lawyers, that the success of a just war gives a lawful title to that which is acquired in the progress of it. Therefore, King James having so far sunk in the war, that he both abandoned his people and deserted the government, all his right and title did accrue to the king, in the right of a conqueror over him.' This ascription of William's title to the right of conquest was especially repugnant to the parliamentary leaders; and although they did not attempt to prevent the circulation of the Pastoral Letter for three years, it was condemned at the same time as Blount's pamphlet above mentioned.

In 1703, Defoe's *Shortest Way with Dissenters*, which raised the ire alike of those it assailed and those it defended, was burned by order of the House of Commons—a decree the true-born Englishman could treat with contempt. In the same year, the Scots parliament indulged themselves in a similar way. The *Historia Anglo-Scotica, or an Impartial History of all that happened between the Kings and Kingdoms of England and Scotland from William the Conqueror to Queen Elizabeth*, by Dr James Drake, was found to contain many false and injurious reflections upon the sovereignty and independence of the Scotch crown and nation, and was therefore burned by the common hangman at the Mercat Cross of Edinburgh. Another work, *Memorials of the Church of England*, by the same author, was censured from the throne, and, by the orders of the House of Commons, burned at the Royal Exchange. Dr Drake's literary life was one of hairbreadth escapes and strange vicissitudes; he was a Tory partisan writer, as daring in breaking the law as he was clever in eluding the clutches of its emissaries. He used to forward his manuscript to the printer through the agency of a masked lady, who took care that her whereabouts should not be traced. He was once saved by the word 'nor' having been substituted for 'not' in an indictment; but at length government managed to lay hold of him, and abandoned to his fate by those his pen had served, he died raving mad. In 1705, a book entitled *The Superiority and Direct Domination of the Imperial Crown of England over the Crown and Kingdom of Scotland*, was so offensive to Scottish notions, that the parliament of that country handed it over to the executioner. Ten years later, the Irish House of Commons ordered the burning at Dublin of 'a false, malicious, and scandalous libel,' published by the Irish Jacobins, and called *A Long History of a Short Session of a Certain Parliament in a Certain Kingdom*, the contents of which were less ambiguous than its title.

The last noticeable instance of book-burning by authority occurred in 1723. The celebrated physician, Dr Mead, purchased from the library of the Landgrave of Hessel a copy of the *Christianisme Restitue* of Servetus, the publication of which cost the author his life. This particular copy was reputed to have belonged to Colloidon, one of his accusers. The doctor determined to reprint the ill-fated work in quarto, but before the edition was completed, the sheets were seized at the instance of Dr Gibson, Bishop of London, and the impression burned, May 27, 1723. A few copies escaped destruction, one of which may be

seen in the Library of the Medical Society of London. In 1770, a perfect reprint was issued, but only four copies are now known to be in existence. The original copy passed from Dr Mead into the hands of the Duc de la Vallière, at the sale of whose collection it was purchased for the Imperial Library of France at the price of 3810 livres.

In these days of cheap printing and toleration, book-burning is looked upon as a puerile folly, upon a par with the Irish method of spiteing a banker by burning his notes. Still literature has suffered losses. As Wat Tyler's victorious rabble made firebrands of the ancient records of the city of London, so mad mobs destroyed invaluable treasures when they set fire to Lord Mansfield's and Dr Priestley's houses. The Vandal Massena, in retreating from the lines of Torres Vedras, wantonly destroyed the church and convent of Alcobaça, rich with the national literature of Portugal.

Valuable works have fallen victims to ignorance and avarice. The niece of Peiresc, 'the attorney-general of the republic of letters,' refused to allow the letters addressed to him by the most eminent scholars of the age to be published, because she found them useful for fuel. Mr Warburton's servant used up a collection of old plays, many of which were unique specimens of our Elizabethan dramatists, for the bottoms of tarts and lighting the fire, for which ignoble purpose the records of the hospital of St Cross were applied by its ignorant housekeeper; and Bishop Cowper's wife, disgusted with his studious habits, destroyed in a few moments the results of eight years' labour. Sometimes authors have been stoics enough to commit literary suicide. Colardeau, when dying, dragged himself to the fire, and sacrificed his translation of Tasso; Raleigh is said to have destroyed the concluding volumes of his *History of the World*; James Montgomery burned a novel, the composition of which had lightened the hours of his imprisonment; Moore put Byron's diary in the fire; D'Orsay did the same office for his own, which must have been worth reading; and Colonel Stewart, son of Dugald Stewart, not only destroyed his own manuscripts, which he calculated had cost him thirteen years of his life, but what was of considerably more consequence, burned his father's incomplete *Philosophy of a Man as a Member of a Political Association*, his Edinburgh lectures on *Political Economy*, and a continuation of his *Encyclopædia Britannica Dissertation*; unmindful of Milton's aphorism, that 'he who destroys a good book kills Reason itself.'

## THE WILD HUNTRESS.

### CHAPTER XL.—THE CARAVAN.

WE rode on to Memphis as rapidly as our horses could travel—far too slow for our desires. Thence a steam-boat carried us to Little Rock, and another to Van Buren; but many days had been consumed while waiting for each boat—so many that, on arriving at Van Buren, we found that the caravan had the start of us by full two weeks. Its route we ascertained without any difficulty—up along the Arkansas to the Rocky Mountains, through the valley of the Huerfano, and the passes Robideau and Cochotopa—thence across the head waters of the Colorado, and by the old Spanish trail to California.

It was essentially a caravan of gold-seekers: adventurers of all nations. Even Indians had gone with it—of the half-civilised tribes of the frontier—red and white equally tempted by the golden attractions spread for them in California. Though large, it was what is termed a 'light train'—having more pack-animals than wagons. On this account, it would make way all the faster; and unless delayed by some accident, we might be a long time in coming up with it;



it was not without a large measure of vexation that we learned how far it had got the start of us.

I should have submitted with less resignation to the necessary delays, but that my mind had been to some extent tranquillised by the contents of Lilian's letter. They had inclined me to the belief that the emigrants were simply *en route* for California—as was all the world just then—and that the Mormon was, after all, not so strong in his new faith as to resist the universal golden lure. His design in taking the squatter with him might be merely of a secular character—having for its object the securing of a partner, in whose brawny arms the wash-pan and rocker might be handled to advantage.

That they whom we sought were gone with the caravan, we were soon satisfied. Holt was too marked a man to have escaped observation, even in a crowd of rough squatters like himself; but more than one eye had rested upon his fair daughter that longed to look upon her again. Her traces were easily told—as testified by the answers to my shy inquiries. Like some bright meteor whose track across the heavens remains marked by its line of luminous phosphorescence, her radiant beauty was remembered. I needed not to inquire of her. Scarcely a coterie of which she was not the subject of conversation—to my infinite jealousy and chagrin. Not that aught was said of her, that should have given rise to such feelings: they were but the offspring of love's selfishness.

Not long had I to submit to such torture. Our stay in Van Buren was of the shortest: in less than twenty hours after our arrival in the village, we made our departure from it—turning our faces towards the almost limitless wilderness of the west.

I had endeavoured to add to our company, but without success. The caravan had cleared Van Buren of its unemployed population; and not an idler remained—at least, not one that felt inclined to adventure with us. Even the needy 'loafer' could not be induced to try the trip—deeming it too dangerous an expedition. To say the least, it was reckless enough; but impelled, by motives far more powerful than the thirst of gold, my comrade and I entered upon our journey, with scarce a thought about its perils.

The only addition to our company was a brace of stout pack-mules, that carried our provisions and other *impedimenta*; while the old horse of the hunter had been replaced by a more promising roadster.

It would be idle to detail the incidents of a journey across the prairies. Ours differed in no way from hundreds of others that have been made, and described—except, perhaps, that after reaching the buffalo ranges, we travelled more by night than by day. We adopted this precaution simply to save our scalps—and along with them our lives—for the buffalo range—especially upon the Arkansas—is peculiarly the 'stamping' ground of the hostile savage. Here may be encountered the Pawnee and Comanche, the Kiowa and Cheyenne, the Waco and fierce Arapaho. Though continually engaged in internecine strife among themselves, all six tribes are equally enemies to the pale-faced intruders on their domain. At this time they were said to be especially hostile—having been irritated by some late encounters with parties of ill-behaved emigrants. It was not without great peril, therefore, that we were passing through their territory; and what we had heard before leaving Van Buren, had made us fully conscious of the risk. To meet with one of the hunting or war parties of these Indians, might not be certain death; but certain would they be to disarm and *dismount* us; and that, in the midst of the great prairie ocean, is a danger that often conducts to the same *dénouement*.

It was not preference, then, but precaution, that led us to adopt the 'secret system' of travelling by night.

Our usual plan was to lie by during the day, or

sometimes only a part of it, concealed in some selected cover—either among rocks or copsewood. By stealing to a conspicuous eminence, we were enabled to view the route ahead of us, and map out our journey for the night. Upon this we would enter an hour or two before sundown: for then the Indian hunter has returned to his encampment, which could be easily avoided, by seeing its smoke from afar. We often saw their smoke, and more than once the Indians themselves; but were never seen by them—so cautiously had we carried out our measures.

In this fashion we 'groped' our way with considerable rapidity, for, guided by the wagon tracks—especially when there was a moon—we could travel almost as fast as by daylight. Only upon dark nights was our progress retarded; but, notwithstanding every impediment, we were enabled to travel faster than the caravan, and we knew that we were rapidly gaining upon it. We could judge by the constantly freshening trail; but we had a more accurate criterion in the *count of the camps*. By the number of these, we knew to a certainty how fast we were gaining upon the caravan. We were in high hopes of being able to come up with it, before it should enter the mountain-passes—more dangerous to the traveller than even the plains themselves, because at that season more beset by bands of marauding savages.

Under the influence of these hopes, we were pressing forward, with all the haste it was in our power to make; when our journey was varied by an incident of a somewhat unexpected character.

#### CHAPTER XLI.

##### AN UNFRAIRIE-LIKE APPEARANCE.

The incident referred to occurred high up the Arkansas, at the celebrated grove known as the 'Big Timbers.'

We had started about two hours before sundown, and were riding in a due westerly direction, over a 'rolling' prairie—the ridges of which, as ill-luck would have it, ran transversely to our course—causing the path to be constantly going upward or downward.

It was not this that troubled us, but the fact that, as we crested each swell, we were freshly exposed to observation from a distance; and this recurring so often, kept us continuously on the alert.

Once or twice, we thought of halting again till after the sun had gone down: for we knew that we were treading upon dangerous ground; but, failing to perceive any fresh Indian sign, we gave way to our irresolution, and continued on.

We proceeded with caution, however: always ascending in stealthy silence, and peeping carefully over the ridges before crossing them. After reconnoitring the intervening valleys, we would ride rapidly across, to make up the time we had lost in our reconnoissance.

In this way had we travelled some eight or ten miles—until the sun was so low down, that his limb rested on the horizon.

We were ascending a ridge, and had got our eyes on a level with its crest; when upon the face of another ridge—about half a mile further on—we beheld two forms outlined against the declivity. We saw that they were human forms, and that they were Indians was our first thought; but a moment's observation convinced us we were in error. They were *afoot*—Indians would have been on horseback. There was no floating drapery about their bodies—Indians would have had something of this sort; besides there were other circumstances observable in their figures and movements, that negated the supposition of their being red-skins. They were singularly disproportioned in size, one appearing at least a foot the taller, while the shorter man had twice this advantage in girth!

'What, in Old Nick's name, kin they be?' inquired

my companion—though only in soliloquy, for he saw that I was as much puzzled as himself. 'Kin ye make 'em out wi' yur glass, capt'n?'

I chanced to have a small pocket-telescope; and adopting the suggestion, I drew it forth, and levelled it.

In another instant, I had within its field of vision a tableau that astonished me.

The figures composing it were but two—a very tall man, and a very short one. Both were dressed in round-about jackets and trousers—one, the shorter, with a little dark cap upon his head; while the height of the taller man was increased full ten inches, by what appeared to be a black silk or beaver hat. The cut of their respective costumes was nearly the same; but the colour was entirely different—the tall personage being all over of a bottle-green tint, while his shorter companion shone more conspicuously in sky-blue.

Notwithstanding their vivid colours, neither costume had anything Indian about it; nor was it like any other sort of 'rig' that one might expect to encounter upon the prairies. What fashion it was, did not occur to me at the moment; for the sun, glancing upon the object-glass of the telescope, hindered me from having a fair view: moreover, my attention was less directed to the dress of the men, than to their movements.

The backs of both were towards us; and they were going forward in the same direction as ourselves. The tall man was in the lead, carrying what appeared to be two guns—one over his left shoulder, and another in his right hand. He was advancing in slow irregular strides, his thin body slightly stooped forward, and his long neck craned out in front of him—as if trying to look over the ridge, whose crest he was just approaching.

The short man was some half-dozen paces in the rear; and moving in a fashion altogether different. His body was bent against the hill at an angle of less than forty-five degrees with the horizon; and his short stout legs were playing in rapid steps, as if keeping time to a treadmill! He appeared to be pushing something before him; but what it was, I could not guess: for it was completely covered by the disc of his body spread broadly against the hill.

It was not till he had reached the summit, and made a slight turn along the ridge, that I saw what this object was.

The exclamation of ludicrous surprise that escaped my companion, told me that he had also made it out.

'Good gosh, capt'n!' cried he, 'look yander! Consarn my skin! ef't ain't a wheelberr!'

A wheel-barrow it certainly was; for the two men were now traversing along the top of the ridge, and their bodies, from head to foot, were conspicuously outlined against the sky. There was no mistaking the character of the object in the hands of the shorter individual—a barrow beyond the shadow of a doubt—trundle and trams, box, body, and spoke-wheel complete!

The sight of this homely object, in the centre of the savage prairies, was ludicrous as unexpected; and we might have hailed it with roars of laughter, had prudence permitted such an indecorous exhibition. As it was, my companion *chuckled* so loudly, that I was compelled to caution him.

Whether my caution came too late, and that Wingrove's laugh was heard, we could not tell; but at that moment, the tall pedestrian looked back, and we saw that he had discovered us. Making a rapid sign to his companion, he bounded off like a startled deer; and, after a plunge or two, disappeared behind the ridge—followed in full run by the man with the wheel-barrow!

One would have supposed that the fright would have led to the abandonment of the barrow; but no: it was taken along—hurried out of our sight in an

instant—and in the next, both man and machine disappeared as suddenly, as if some trap had admitted them into the bowels of the earth!

The singular fashion of their flight—the long strides taken by the gander-like leader, and the scrambling attempt at escape made by the barrow-man—produced a most comic effect. I was no longer able to restrain myself, but joined my companion in loud and repeated peals of laughter.

In this merry mood, and without any apprehension of danger, we advanced towards the spot where the odd figures had been seen. Some broken ground delayed us; and as half a mile of it had to be passed over, we were a considerable time in reaching the summit of the hill. On arriving there, and looking over the swell, behind which they had disappeared, neither tall nor short man was to be seen. A timbered valley lay beyond: into this they had evidently escaped. The track of the wheel-barrow, where it had pressed down the grass, alone indicated their recent presence upon the spot, as it did also the direction they had taken.

Their retreating from us was easily accounted for: they could have seen only the tops of our heads, and had no doubt taken us for Indians!

## CHAPTER XLII.

## A FOOT OF THIRTEEN INCHES.

The presence of the wheel-barrow explained a point, that had been puzzling us for some days. We had fallen upon its track more than once, and supposed it to have been made by the wheel of a cart; but in no instance being able to find the corresponding one, had given it up as a hopeless enigma. The only explanation we had succeeded in offering ourselves was: that some light cart had accompanied the caravan—the load of which, being badly balanced, had thrown the weight upon one wheel, allowing the other to pass over the ground without making an impression. As it was only on dry grass we had traced it, this explanation had sufficed—though far from being satisfactory. Neither my companion nor myself ever thought of a wheel-barrow. Who would, in such a place?

'In the name o' Old Nick, who kin they be?' asked Wingrove, as we halted on the ridge, where the fugitives had been last seen.

'I am not without my suspicions,' I replied, just then thinking of a peculiarity that had not received my attention before—the cut and colour of their dresses. 'If I'm not mistaken, the two shy birds that have fled from us are a brace of Uncle Samuel's eagles.'

'Sojers?'

'In all probability, and "old sojers" at that.'

'But what 'ud sojers be a doin' out hyar?'

'Travelling to California, like ourselves.'

'Desarters, may be?'

'Just what I suspect. No doubt the pair have slipped off from some of the frontier posts; and having no opportunity to provide themselves with a better means of transport, have brought the wheel-barrow with them. It is ludicrous enough, but by no means improbable. There are some queer customers in the pay of Uncle Sam.'

'I think there be—ha, ha, ha! What shed we do, capt'n? Hedn't we better catch up to 'em?'

'That, comrade, may be easier said than done. If they're deserters—and they must be, if they're soldiers at all—they'll take precious good care not to let any one come near them, if they can help it. The escort that accompanies the train will account for their not being along with it. If they've caught a glimpse of my buttons, they'll be *cached* by this time.'

'They only seed our heads. I reck'n they tuk us for Indiyuns?'

'In that case, they'll hide from us all the same—only a little more cunningly.'

'Consarn thar sojer skins! Ef they war as cunnin' as a kuppel o' possums, they can't a hide the track o' the berra; an' so long's they keep in the timber, I kalklate I kin lift thar trail. I reck'n, I hain't quite forgot how; though I im bamfoozled a bit by these hyar parairies—consarn them! Ah! them woods, capt'n! it diz one good to look at 'em!'

The eyes of the young hunter sparkled with enthusiasm as he spoke. It was a real forest that was before us—a large tract covered with gigantic cotton-wood trees, and the only thing deserving the name of forest we had seen for many days. As my companion stood gazing upon it, I could trace upon his countenance a joyous expression, that rarely appeared there. The sight of the 'Big Timbers' recalled to him the forests of his own Tennessee—with happy memories of other times. They were not unmingled with shadows of regret: as I could tell by the change that soon came stealing over his features.

'We must try to overtake them,' said I, without answering to the ebullition. 'It is important for us to come up with them. Even if they be deserters, they are white men; and all whites are friends here. They muster two guns; and if these fellows are what I take them to be, they know how to handle them. We must follow them: there's no time to be lost.'

'Ye're right thar, capt'n! The night's a comin' down fast. It's a'ready gittin' dark; an' I'm afeerd it'll be tough trackin' under the timber. If we're to catch up wi' them the night, we hain't a minnit to spare.'

'Let us forward then!'

Crossing the ridge, we descended rapidly on the other side—the track of the wheel guiding us in a direct line to the nearest point of the woods.

We could tell that the barrow had been trundled down hill at top speed—by the manner in which the iron tire had abraded the surface of the slope.

We had no difficulty in following the trace as far as the edge of the timber, and for some distance into it; but there, to our great surprise, the wheel-track abruptly ended! It was not that we had lost it—by its having passed over dry or rocky ground. On the contrary, around the spot where it so suddenly disappeared, the surface was comparatively soft; and even an empty barrow would have made an impression sufficiently traceable, either by my companion or myself.

After beating about for some time, and extending our circle to the distance of a hundred yards or so, we failed to recover the sign. Certainly the barrow had not gone farther—at all events, not upon its trundle.

Instinctively, we turned our eyes upward—not with any superstitious belief that the fugitives had made a sudden ascent into the air—but the idea had occurred to us, that they might have hidden themselves in a tree, and drawn the barrow up into it.

A single glance was sufficient to satisfy us that this conjecture was erroneous. The thin foliage of the cotton-woods offered no cover. A squirrel could hardly have concealed itself among their branches.

'I've got it!' exclaimed the hunter, once more seeking along the surface. 'Hyar's thar tracks; tho' thar ain't no signs of the berra. I see how they've blinded us. By goah! thar a kuppel o' cunnin' old coons, whosomever they be.'

'How have they managed it?'

'Tuk up the machine on thar shoulders, an' toted it thataway! See! thar's thar own tracks! They've gone out hyar—'tween these two trees.'

'Right, comrade!—that is how they've done it, and sure enough that is the direction they have taken.'

'Well! ef I wan't bothered wi' these hyar animals, I ked follow them tracks easy enough. We'd soon kum upon the wheel agin, I reck'n—they ain't agoin' to travel fur, wi' a hump like thet on thar shoulders.'

'No; it's not likely.'

'Wal, then, capt'n, s'pose we leave our critters hyar, an' take arter 'em afut? We kin quarter the groun' a good bit ahead; an' I guess we'll eyther kum on them or thar berra track afore long.'

I agreed to this proposal; and, having tied our four quadrupeds to the trees, we started off into the depth of the woods.

Only for a short distance were we able to make out the footsteps of the men: for they had chosen the dry sward to walk upon. In one place, where the path was bare of grass, their tracks were distinctly outlined; and a minute examination of them assured me of the correctness of my conjecture—that we were trailing a brace of runaways from a military post. There was no mistaking the print of the 'regulation' shoe. Its shape was impressed upon my memory, as plainly as in the earth before my eyes, and it required no quartermaster to recognise the low, ill-rounded heel and flat pegged soles.

I identified them at a glance; and saw, moreover, that the feet of both the fugitives were encased in the same cheap *chaussure*. Only in size did the tracks differ; and in this so widely, that the smaller was little more than two-thirds the length of the larger one! The latter was remarkable for size—not so much in the breadth as length, which was not less than thirteen standard inches! On noting this peculiarity, my companion uttered an exclamation of astonishment.

'Thar's a fut, an' no mistake!' cried he. 'I rock'n twar long legs as made them tracks. Well! ef I hedn't seed the man hisself, I'd a swore thar war giants in these parts!'

I made no reply, though far more astonished than he. But my astonishment sprang from a different source; and was mixed up in my mind with some ludicrous memories. *I remembered the foot!*

#### CHAPTER XLIII

##### TRACKING THE TRUNDLE.

Yes, I had seen that foot before; or one so very like it, that the resemblance was cheating me. This could hardly be. With the exception of its fellow, the foot of my remembrance could have no counterpart on the prairies: it must be the same.

At first, my recollections of it were but vague. I remembered the foot associated with some ludicrous incidents; but what they were, or when and where they had occurred, I could not say. Certainly I had seen it somewhere; but where?

No matter: the foot recalled no unpleasant associations. I felt satisfied it was a *friendly* one; and was now more anxious than ever of overtaking its sesquipedalian owner.

After proceeding a short distance, the shoe-tracks again became too indistinct to be followed farther. By quartering, however, we came upon them once more—at a place where the impressions were deep and clearly defined.

Once more the immense foot rose upon the *retina* of my memory—this time more vividly—this time enabling me to *place* it: for I now remembered many an odd incident that had secured it a corner on the page of my recollections. Sticking through a stirrup with an enormous Mexican spur upon its heel—its owner mounted on a horse thin and rawboned as himself—I remembered the foot, as well as the limbs and body to which it was attached.

Beyond a doubt, the tall fugitive we were following was a friend—a veteran of the Rifle Rangers. The figure, as seen through the telescope, confirmed me in the belief. The long limbs, arms, and neck—the thin, angular body—all were characteristics of the bodily architecture of Jephthah Bigelow.

I no longer doubted that the taller of the two men was my old follower 'Jeph,' or 'Sure-shot,' as his



Ranger comrades had christened him; and appropriate was the designation—for a surer shot than Jeph never looked through the hind-sights of a rifle.

Who the little man might turn out to be, I could not guess—though I was not without some recollections of a figure resembling his. I remembered a certain Patrick, who was also a 'mimber of the corpse,' and whose *build* bore a close resemblance to that seen between the trams of the barrow.

My conjecture as to who the men were, increased my desire to overtake them. If the tall man should turn out to be Sure-shot, a rifle would be added to our strength worth a dozen ordinary guns; and, considering the risk we were running—in danger of losing our scalps every hour in the day—it was of no small importance that we should join company with the deserters.

We made every exertion, therefore, to come up with them—my comrade employing all the lore of the backwoods, in his effort to recover their traces.

The new footmarks we had discovered, though lost the instant after, had served one good purpose—they indicated the general direction which the two men had followed; and this was an important point to be ascertained.

We found another index in the trees. These in most places stood thickly together; and it was only here and there that an object of such breadth as a wheel-barrow could pass *conveniently* between their trunks. Carried upon the shoulders, it would be an awkward load with which to squeeze through any tight place; and it was reasonable to conclude that only the more open aisles of the forest would be followed. This enabled us to make pretty sure of the route taken; and, after trusting to such guidance for several hundred yards, we had the satisfaction to light once more upon the shoe-tracks.

Again only a short distance were we able to follow them; but they confirmed our belief that we were still on the right trail.

My comrade had suggested that the man who carried the barrow 'wud soon tire o' totin' it;' and this proved to be the case. On striking into an old buffalo-path, our eyes were once more gladdened by the sight of the wheel-track—plainly imprinted in the mud.

Our 'prospecting' was for the time at an end. The barrow-track continued along the buffalo-path; and we were able to follow it, almost as fast as our legs could carry us.

Even after it had grown too dark for us to see the track of the wheel, we were not disconcerted. We could follow it by the *feel*—stopping only at intervals to make sure that it was still among our feet.

In this way we had travelled, to the full distance of a mile from the place where our horses had been left, when all at once the barrow-track gave out. The buffalo-path continued on; but no barrow had passed over it, unless carried as before. This was improbable, however; and we were forced to the conclusion that the two men had turned off, by some side-path we had not observed.

While looking for this, a sound reached our ears, that resembled the murmur of a distant waterfall; but, on close attention, we could distinguish in it a different intonation. Taking the direction whence it came, the sound was heard more distinctly; and, before we had advanced a hundred yards through the thickly standing trees, we were aware that what we heard was the sound of human voices.

Another hundred yards brought us within hearing of words—at the same time that a luminous reflection cast upwards upon the trees, indicated that there was a fire at no great distance off. As yet, the under-wood hindered us from seeing the fire; but guided by its light, we continued to advance; and, after making another long reach through the leafy cover, we got the fire well under our eyes, as well as those who had kindled it.

We had no conjecture as to whether we had been following the true track, or whether it was the two runaway travellers we had *treed*. The point was determined by an object seen standing close to the fire, in the full glare of its ruddy light.

Need I say it was the wheel-barrow?

#### CHAPTER XLIV.

##### A BRACE OF 'OLD SOJERS.'

Yes, it was the wheel-barrow, and the 'U. S. ORDNANCE' branded upon its side, and visible under the light of the blazing fire, told whence it had come. Either Fort Gibson or Fort Smith was minus a barrow, drawn from their stores by no very formal *requisition*.

There were the takers of it—one on each side of the fire—presenting as great a contrast as could well be found in two human beings: although of the same species, as unlike each other as a tall greyhound to a turnspit.

Both were seated, though in different attitudes. The little man was 'squatting'—that is, with legs crossed under him, after the fashion of tailors. The long legs of his *vis-à-vis* would scarcely admit of being thus disposed of; and his weight was resting altogether upon his hips and heels. In this posture, the caps of his knees stood up to the level of his shoulders—so that his body, viewed *en profile*, presented a pretty accurate imitation of the letter N, that sort termed by engravers the 'rustic letter.' The huge black hat capping one extremity, and the long pedal-like feet that rested horizontally on the ground terminating the other, completed the alphabetical resemblance. A face, with a certain mocking monkeyish expression, but without any trait of fierceness or ill-nature—a nose slightly snub—quick scintillating eyes—a chin, tipped with a little tuft of clay-coloured beard—some half-dozen queue-like tangles of bright yellowish hair, hanging down behind the hat—the hat itself a black 'silk,' badly battered—such were the salient points of the portrait appearing above the knee-caps of the taller man.

With the exception of the 'tile,' his costume was altogether military—to me well known. It was the ordinary undress of the mounted rifles: a dark-green round-about of coarsest cloth—with a row of small brass buttons from throat to waist, and overalls of the same material. In the particular sample before us, overalls was rather an inappropriate name:—the garment so designated scarcely covered the calves of the wearer's legs, though of these there was not much to cover. The jacket appeared equally scant; and between its bottom border and the waistband of the trousers, there was an interval of at least six inches. In this interval was seen a shirt of true Isabella colour, which also appeared over the breast—the jacket being worn unbuttoned. The frouzy cotton was visible at other places—peeping through various rents both in jacket and trousers. A black leather-stock concealed the collar of the shirt—if there was any—and though the stock itself was several inches in depth, there were other several inches of naked neck rising above its rim. Coarse woollen socks, and the cheap *contract*-shoe completed the costume of Sure-shot—for it was he.

His contrasting comrade was equally in military garb—even more so, by the additional article of a cloth forage-cap. It was also an undress uniform; but, though of very similar cut to the other, and resembling it in the quality of the material, the colour was altogether different. It was sky-blue, turned white with wear—the buttons of the jacket being of lead, and the facings of white worsted tape. It was a better fit than the green uniform; and its wearer had evidently some conceit in the style of it—as was evidenced by the jacket being carefully

buttoned from waist to throat, and the forage-cap set jauntily on 'three hairs.'

The little man was an 'infantry.' His horizontal diameter was twice that of his tall companion of the rifles, and in the rounded contour of his body, not an angle was apparent. His garments were quite filled by his body, arms, and legs—so that there was not a wrinkle to be seen anywhere. It was a form usually styled 'dapper.' His face was also of the rotund shape—the features all tolerably regular, with the exception of the nose—that, like the nasal organ of his comrade, was a *nez retroussé*—the turn-up being infinitely more pronounced.

The expression was equally indicative of good-nature and good-fellowship—as the apple-like bloom of his cheeks, and the ochreous tinge upon the tip of the nose, sufficiently testified. Cheeks, lips, and chin were beardless—with the exception of a thick stubble that had lately sprung up; but some well-greased rings of a darkish colour, ruffing out under the rim of the forage-cap, shewed that the 'infantry' was not insensible to the pride of hair. Neither in regard to him had I made a mistaken conjecture. Another old acquaintance and comrade-in-arms—the redoubtable Patrick O'Tigg—a true son of the 'Sad.'

The two worthies, when first seen, were seated as described—both engaged in a very similar occupation—cooking. It was by the most simple process—that of roasting. Each had in his hand a long sapling, upon the end of which a piece of red meat was impaled; and this, held over the fire, was fast blackening in the blaze. More of the same meat—buffalo-beef, it appeared—was seen in the wheel-barrow; its other freight being one or two greasy bags, a brace of knapsacks, a cartouche box and belt, two ordnance spades, with the guns—a 'regulation' rifle and musket—lying across the top.

It was evident from this collection that the men were deserters—that they had armed and equipped themselves at the expense of the quarter-master; but perhaps the pay-master was in arrears with them; and they had adopted this ready and effectual method of wiping out the score.

My only wonder was at not seeing a brace of branded horses along with them; but in all probability, on the day—or night—of their departure, the stable sentry had been doing his duty.

On becoming assured of the identity of the two men, my first impulse was to step forward to the fire, and make myself known to them. So eagerly were both engaged in attending to their spits, that they had neither seen nor heard us—although they themselves were now silent, and we were within less than twenty feet of their fire. The intervening bushes, however, would have sheltered us from their sight, even if they had been a little more vigilant—as I should have expected Sure-shot to have been. They were trusting all to the thicket in which they had pitched their camp, and, being hungry and wearied no doubt, were for the moment off their guard.

Some fantasy decided me not to disturb them for a moment—a sort of curiosity to hear what they would say, and, if possible, discover their *whence* and their *whither*. We were perfectly within ear-shot; and could have heard even a whisper passing from their lips—as we could also note the expression upon their faces.

A sign to my companion was sufficient; and, crouching behind the leafy screen, we awaited the continuation of the suspended dialogue.

#### 'DECLINED' LIVES.

A LIFE-ASSURANCE office declines an offer of business when not quite satisfied regarding the present health or general constitutional condition of the person offering it. Practically, perhaps a fifth, or even a fourth, of the persons applying to get their lives insured are

unable to stand the investigation made into their state of health, and become, accordingly, 'declined lives.' We find that one of the greater offices—the *Royal*—of which the central seat is, we believe, at Liverpool—has lately instituted an inquiry into the subsequent history of a large proportion of its 'declined lives,' and ascertained that their mortality, as compared with that of the accepted, has been, for ages between 30 and 40, in the ratio of 3·4 to '896, or about 3½ to 1. Had the lives of that kind rejected during the last five years by the Royal been accepted, the mortality would have been 225 per cent. in excess of the tables, and the claims 319 per cent. above the amount expected; by which, of course, the accumulations made by the healthy would have suffered a serious deduction.

The painstaking actuary of the Royal brings forward these facts with all delicacy towards the individuals concerned, and only for the legitimate purpose of shewing the good effects of careful selection. But the general fact can only be viewed as one of many revealing the evils that all life-assurance is heir to. It takes, with some men, an incipient fear about their health, to make them think of life-assurance. They do not feel sufficiently ill to hesitate about describing themselves as healthy. The uncertainty in favour of life in all circumstances easily reconciles them to a bargain with an office which apparently deals in uncertainties: they fail to observe that the office in reality deals in generalisations based on certain data, and that to put wrong data before it, such as a flattering description of a deteriorated life, is to do it a gross injustice. Let us not press too hard the charge against the offerers of lives unsuitable for life-assurance; let us rather make all possible allowance for the obscurity of the human conscience with regard to all subjects in which the wrong is not directly traceable on to its consequences. But we may at the same time take advantage of this *exposé* of the fact of 'declined lives,' to impress on the public that offices are often sinned against, instead of always sinning, as the juries in assurance disputes would seem to make a rule of supposing.

#### A U T U M N.

WHEN Nature wears her russet gown,  
And swallows to the south have flown—  
When grapes turn purple on the wall,  
And from the boughs the ripe pears fall—  
When lambs and sheep grow thick with wool,  
Then Autumn's lap with fruit is full.

When corn is gathered in the barn,  
And reeds are rattling in the tarn—  
When partridges in coveys fly,  
And dogs and men are company—  
When squirrels fill their nutty store,  
Then Autumn's morn with frost is hoar.

When sleep-mice hide their sleek fat forms,  
And deep in earth bore ringed worms—  
When leaves come rustling down from trees,  
And flies the cattle cease to tease,  
Then oak his sturdy arms doth bare  
To battle with the autumn air.

When silent robins beg for crumbs,  
And old men fumble with their thumbs—  
When fires shew again in halls,  
And bats hook on to dark warm walls,  
Then cold wind whistles o'er the moor,  
And Autumn shuts the summer door. X.

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